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ABSTRACT

The suggested classification of basic research areas in rural development mentioned in this report were population and manpower, human resource development, improvement of community and area environment, and measurement of family and community well-being. The 4 broad categories suggested for improvement in the quality of family living were (1) family environment and human development, including adjustment, socialization, housing, and community service needs; (2) family use of resources, including decision-making and financial management; (3) human nutritional well-being; and (4) clothing and household textiles, including choices, habits, and consumption. Various aspects of rural development were discussed in terms of the problem and scope, objective, research approaches, and research effort. Various aspects of family living were discussed in terms of the scope of the problem, situation, research approaches, potential benefits, research resources, and research effort. The 2 approaches suggested to make the best use of limited research resources were rapidly to increase funding from the 1966 level toward the projected levels, so that support could reach the "critical mass" required for research impact, and to make more effective use of current resources through better coordination among states and between states and the Department of Agriculture. (PS)

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A National Program of Research for

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND FAMILY LIVING

RC006865

Prepared by

A JOINT TASK FORCE OF THE
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AND THE STATE UNIVERSITIES
AND LAND GRANT COLLEGES

FOREWORD

The United States Department of Agriculture and State Agricultural Experiment Stations are continuing comprehensive planning of research. This report is a part of this joint research planning and was prepared under recommendation 2 (page 204, paragraph 3) of the National Program of Research for Agriculture.

The Task Force which developed the report was requested to express their collective judgment as individual scientists and research administrators in regard to the research questions that need to be answered, the evaluation of present research efforts, and changes in research programs to meet present and future needs. The Task Force was asked to use the National Program of Research for Agriculture as a basis for their recommendation. However, in recognition of changing research needs it was anticipated that the Task Force recommendations might deviate from the specific plans of the National Program. These deviations are identified in the report along with appropriate reasons for change.

The report represents a valuable contribution to research plans for agriculture. It will be utilized by the Department and the State Agricultural Experiment Stations in developing their research programs. It should not be regarded as a request for the appropriation of funds or as a proposed rate at which funds will be requested to implement the research program.

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This report has been prepared in limited numbers. Persons having a special interest in the development of public research and related programs may request copies from the Research Program Development and Evaluation Staff, Room 318-E Administration Bldg., USDA, Washington, D.C. 20250.

November 1968

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PREFACE

Background

The long-range study, "A National Program of Research for Agriculture," conducted by a joint USDA-SAES Task Force, was published in October 1966. The second recommendation of the study called for a more systematic and continuing mechanism that would facilitate joint research program planning, evaluation, and coordination. The Agricultural Research Planning Committee at its July and December 1966 meetings recommended the establishment of task forces to develop coordinated State-Federal plans for specified areas of research. Subsequently, thirty-two task forces were established, of which this is one.

Authority

The Joint Task Force on Rural Development was established by memoranda of Dr. George L. Mehren, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture, and Dr. A. G. Hazen, Chairman of the Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy, dated March 24, 1967. Subsequently, pursuant to the recommendation of the Agricultural Research Planning Committee, the scope of the Task Force assignment was enlarged to include more aspects of the quality of family living than encompassed in the original assignment, and the name of the Task Force was changed to "Rural Development and the Quality of Family Living."

Membership

USDA — John H. Southern, Director, Economic Development Division, Economic Research Service, Co-Chairman
Faith Clark, Director, Consumer and Food Economics Research Division, Agricultural Research Service
C. B. Gilliland, Assistant to the Administrator, Rural Community Development Service
Paul J. Jehlik, Acting Director, Economics, Marketing, Rural and Community Development Research Program, Cooperative State Research Service.
Earl Pettyjohn, Director, Community Resource Development Division, Federal Extension Service
Mary Beth Minden, Director, Human Nutrition and Consumer Use Research Program, Cooperative State Research Service

SAES -- Roy E. Huffman, Vice President for Research, Montana State University, Bozeman, Montana, Co-Chairman
R. J. Hildreth, Associate Managing Director, Farm Foundation, Chicago, Illinois
George M. Beal, Department of Sociology, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa
C. E. Bishop, Vice President, University Public Service Programs, University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina
Raymond D. Vlasin, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Minnesota, Institute of Agriculture, St. Paul, Minnesota

Ruth Deacon, Professor, Home Management and Family Economics, Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center, Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio
Ruth Galbraith, Professor of Textiles, Department of Home Economics, University of Illinois, Urbana, Illinois
Gwen Bymers, Professor of Household Economics and Management, College of Home Economics, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York

Staff Secretary --
Max Hinds, Research Program Development and Evaluation Staff, USDA

INTRODUCTION

In the National Program of Research for Agriculture, Goals VIII and IX were to: "Raise the Level of Living of Rural People" and 'Improve Community Services and Environment". These goals were established to deal with a situation described as follows:

> Rural people are relatively disadvantaged. They are inadequately prepared to fully participate in modern society -- consequently, their quality of living never reaches the level that might be achieved. Factors contributing to the low level of achievement are inadequacies in: educational preparation, occupational choices, business ability, employable skills, effective use of their personal and financial resources, and the effectiveness with which they adjust to social and economic change.

A recent development that has a bearing on these goals is the grim picture of rural poverty presented in the report of the President's National Advisory Commission on Rural Poverty. Among the causal factors cited were: lack of organization or spokesmen for bringing the Nation's attention to the problem, exclusion until recently from major social and welfare legislation, unemployment and underemployment, hunger, malnutrition, disease, inferior educational facilities and opportunities, poor housing, inadequate community institutions and public services -- yet the Commission was convinced that the abolition of rural poverty in the United States, perhaps for the first time in any Nation, is completely feasible -- that the Nation has the economic resources and the technical means for doing it. In addition to this report, the State experiment stations, as well as the U. S. Department of Agriculture, have been carrying on some research that highlights these problems and offers alternative solutions.

To bring about improvements in the quality of rural family life will require more knowledge about these causal factors -- why they exist -- and how they can be changed by individual action, group action, or public programs. Without this knowledge, any course of action or program will have no intelligence base on which to build desired improvements.

Billions of dollars are being spent in the United States in attacking problems of families, communities, and the environment, and greater amounts may be needed in the future. In both current and projected situations, funding and program measures are being pursued without the required research and evaluation for effective and efficient policy formulation and direction. Scores of millions of dollars could be saved or used more effectively with measures based on the fundamental knowledge which research can furnish.

This report, in two parts, deals with the rural aspects of the situation described above. Part I focuses on Rural Development. It identifies needed research dealing primarily with opportunity for income improvement and for betterment of rural people as they live and work within a given community or migrate to seek greater opportunity. The main elements in this phase of the program include: increasing per capita and area incomes; expanding employment opportunities for rural manpower; upgrading and developing the population

itself, especially since this process would enhance vocational alternatives; improving the use and management of resources by local governing bodies; and promoting regional or area planning. Not only are the elements in rural development research highly interrelated, but boundaries become diffused as between rural development and research elements that contribute to improved quality of family living. Part II, Quality of Family Living, deals primarily with the well-being of individuals and families, including their behavior, attitudes and interests as family members and consumers, their decision-making, their endeavors to attain goals, and their relationships to the community.

The two parts are interrelated and the need to view them as companion pieces is suggested. The research approach and the ensuing action to solve problems may differ in the community situation and in the individual or family situation. Increased attention in recent years to the problems of "people" has served to bring about developments that affect programs dealing with family living and with group and community activities. In 1963, a work group was appointed by the Cooperative State Research Service, USDA, to review the research conducted by the land grant institutions in the areas of the community, the family, and the consumer. The report of this group dealt with the social and material well-being of individuals and families, including their behavior and interests as consumers. It encompassed their decision-making, their endeavors to attain goals, and their relationships to the community.

In August 1965, a new research Division within the Economic Research Service of USDA was created with the title of Economic Development Division. This action followed passage in 1964 of the Economic Opportunity Act and the Economic Development Act of 1965. Public interest in improving rural living was creating new demands for information and analysis that would help bring about improved opportunities for people. The research program of the new Division is concerned with the economic development of rural areas, rural local government, community organizations, and government and nongovernment services of a community nature, rural population and manpower, and well-being and opportunities of rural people.

In 1966, a publication, "Focus", was prepared by the Home Economics Subcommittee of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy, of the American Association of Land-Grant Colleges and State Universities. The emphasis in this publication was placed on: family stability, consumer competence, family health, family housing, and community and resource development.

Due to the strategic importance of research in human resource and economic development, the Task Force felt that long-range planning for this area would profit from a new look at problem classification and allocation of resources. The present report deals with research problem areas under the following titles: In Part I, Rural Development: Improvement of Economic Opportunities for Rural People; Causes of, and Remedies for, Poverty Among Rural People; Improvement of Rural Community Institutions and Services; Housing Needs of Rural Families; The Communication Process in Rural Life; and Individual and Family Adjustment to Change. In Part II, Quality of Family Living, the problem areas are: Family Adjustment to Change; Family Communication; Family Use of Resources; Family Poverty-Causes and Remedies; Family Housing Needs; Family Community Service Needs; Food Choices, Habits, and Consumption; Home Food Use; Human Nutritional Well-Being; and Selection and Function of Consumer Textile Items.

The Task Force, however, recommends a more functional classification of problem areas and offers criteria to guide the allocation, or reallocation, of scarce resources to accomplish the objectives of this important field. The suggested categories in the human resource and economic development field are divided into "Rural Development" and "Quality of Family Living," as in the present report. This dichotomy, however, is more properly related to considerations of resource personnel and administration than it is to functional problems and issues.

The suggested classification of basic research areas in Rural Development is:

I Population and Manpower
II Human Resource Development
III Improvement of Community and Area Environment
IV Measurement of Family and Community Well-being

In Quality of Family Living, four broad categories are suggested:

I Family Environment and Human Development, including Adjustment, Socialization, Housing, and Community Service Needs
II Family Use of Resources, including Decision-Making and Financial Management
III Human Nutritional Well-being, including Food Choices, Habits, and Consumption; and Home and Commercial Preparation of Food
IV Clothing and Household Textiles, including Choices, Habits, and Consumption

The principal advantage in delineating broad problem areas of research is that problems per se are both unpredictable over time and are interrelated. Treating symptoms or segments of a problem will not solve the larger syndrome of which they are a part. The main thrust in considering the allocation of resources is that the supply of competent personnel in these fields is limited, and that interdisciplinary efforts are absolutely required.

With respect to the needs of manpower, the Task Force expressed concern as to whether or not the necessary talent could be trained and recruited for this work in time and in the quantity needed. Moreover, a wide range of disciplines with new research approaches and competencies will be needed if this program is to be fully implemented. Agricultural economists, rural sociologists, agricultural engineers, and home economists have made the major inputs to date. Needed in addition are those in public administration, community development, and education, as well as labor economists, regional planners, political scientists, and public policy and welfare economists. Personnel competencies heretofore inadequately involved will be required, such as those in institution management, housing, related art and design, human development, sociology, and social psychology.

Even in the "traditional" areas of scientists' contributions to rural development and family living research, there is a serious shortage of competent manpower at both the State and Federal levels. There was a definite feeling on the part of the Task Force that current efforts were somewhat fragmented and that there was considerable overlapping and duplication. Therefore,

much better use of current personnel is a necessity. The Task Force urges colleges and universities to consider their academic and research training programs and to make modifications needed to supply additional talent for this expanding area. The Department of Agriculture, through its training program, is urged to continue efforts to recruit and/or retrain qualified scientists to fill critical positions that will contribute to this field. Moreover, it is recommended that the Department seek authority for training grants so that students "on stream" may be attracted to programs in support of manpower needs in these problem areas. And finally, both the States and the Department are in a position to reallocate some current manpower to these high priority research areas.

To make the best use of limited research resources, the Task Force urgently recommends two approaches, namely: (1) Through reallocation, rapidly increase funding from the 1966 level toward the projected levels, so that support reaches the "critical mass" required for research impact; and (2) make more effective use of current resources through better coordination among States and between the States and the Department of Agriculture.

JOINT RESEARCH TASK FORCE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND QUALITY OF FAMILY LIVING
Summary of Inventory and Recommended SMY's for Rural Development

Research Problem Areas	1966 1/			1972 2/			1977 2/		
	Total	SAES	USDA	Total	SAES	USDA	Total	SAES	USDA
907 and Improvement of Economic 804 Opportunities for Rural People	77	42	35	237	131	106	279	153	126
803 Causes of, and Remedies for, Poverty	19	11	8	64	36	28	83	48	35
908 Improvement of Rural Community Institutions and Services	54	29	25	93	48	45	118	62	56
801 Housing Needs of Rural Families	12	5	7	28	15	13	36	19	17
805 The Communication Process in Rural Life	17	17	---	22	22	---	27	27	---
806 Individual and Family Adjustment to Change	22	17	5	41	35	6	48	41	7
TOTAL Rural Development	201	121	80	485	287	198	591	350	241

1/ Inventory of Agricultural Research, Volume I, June 1967.
2/ A joint committee representing the Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy and the USDA met in Chicago on July 21-22, 1967, to review manpower allocations and recommended the SMY's shown.

RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND QUALITY OF FAMILY LIVING

Two major areas of concern about life in rural America are encompassed in this consideration of long-range research in Rural Development and Quality of Family Living. The future well-being of rural people is contingent on a deeper understanding of their present and future needs as individuals and families, the social institutions that will contribute to better rural communities, and the development of wider avenues of opportunity for this and the coming generation.

It is highly doubtful that the problems which demand solution in rural America today, and indeed their counterparts in urban centers, will be met without far greater attention to "people-oriented" research than is presently the case. The "human condition" in rural America is too poorly understood to be quickly or effectively ameliorated. The long-range research that is required embraces a wide range of social and economic aspects of individual, family, and community life in rural areas, both farm and nonfarm. The Task Force report which follows calls attention to the crucial areas of concern in Rural Development and Quality of Family Living and urges that the highest priority consideration be given to those discussed.

PART I. RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Definition

Research in the field of rural development focuses directly on the promotion of rural well-being. The principal components that contribute to this goal are: adequate income and job opportunities, social and cultural amenities, and the wise use of family and community resources. These factors are highly interrelated, requiring an interdisciplinary approach toward better understanding of them. A coordinated attack on the problems of rural development should enlist the talents of economists, sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, political scientists, and home economists.

This research includes the following problem areas:

Improvement of economic opportunities for rural people
Causes of, and remedies for, poverty among rural people
Improvement of rural community institutions and services
Housing needs of rural families
The communication process in rural life
Individual and family adjustment to change

Farm policy and farm income *per se* are not subject for rural development research, but their interrelationship has a strong impact on opportunity for rural people. In this context, farm policy and income are important research issues.

Problem and Scope

Rural development research in today's society needs a new "take-off" point. The molds and patterns of yesterday will not do. As modern technology and rapid urbanization have changed the American scene, development of rural people and places must take on a new look. The convenient rural-urban dichotomy of earlier days offers little as a concept in our rapidly changing society of today.

Research in rural development must be, first of all, people-oriented. It must reveal demographic factors about rural people - how many, where located, what ages; it must help us to understand more about their economic situation - income, labor force status, occupational distribution; it must describe and interpret their life styles - housing, social and cultural services and amenities, tastes and attitudes, aspirations and opportunities.

Research must also illuminate the causes and results of one of the most significant phenomena of our day - high mobility - especially the great outpouring of people from rural areas. We know this has resulted in a population imbalance between country and city, but we need to learn how to guide the movement of people to economic opportunity, how to create opportunity in rural small towns, how to prepare people to take advantage of it. We must find out what it is that motivates some to move and others to remain where they are regardless of deprivation there. Is it only the young who are lured to the city? Do the immobile ones simply not know about, or believe in, alternatives, or are they really exercising a choice? There are many unanswered questions of vital significance in the field of population and demography.

Regional growth in the United States has been uneven. Areas of heavy outmigration tend to suggest that there is a reason why people move. We know that agricultural technology has contributed greatly to high farm productivity - but it has also displaced many workers. We know that depopulated areas suffer from a shrinking tax base, inadequate and inefficient social services, and lack of job opportunities. We know that some regions have suffered persistent and long-time unemployment, low income, and relative disadvantage. But we do not know enough about how to revitalize these rural areas and level out economic growth across the country, even in an affluent society.

Too little attention has thus far been given to the inextricable tie between the "urban crisis" and the deteriorating economic situation in the countryside. Some give recognition to the rural origin of many city dwellers, but few are giving support to the urgent need to revitalize small communities and "plant" new towns. Research is indispensable to gain an answer to the matter of what is a viable community - how large should it be, where should it be located, how can industry be induced to locate there, how can people be guided to such communities. We need to know the size and kind of town that can compete successfully with the larger social and cultural centers.

Current trends in population movement and overcrowding of cities will continue unless attractive alternatives are created outside of metropolitan areas. The lot of both rural and urban residents will be improved by altering present trends. People should be provided a meaningful choice - to live in the rural countryside or live in the city - without disparity in economic and social

conditions. Such is not now the case. Rural development research can help to point the way toward greater rural opportunity.

Evaluation of Research

Past and current studies have documented and highlighted many significant changes in rural America. Among the findings are the following:

Rural America's occupational structure is now highly diversified;
Where possible, most rural people orient their social and economic life to towns and cities, often commuting to work and traveling some distance to shopping and health centers; their children go by bus to consolidated schools in many areas;
In some regions of the country, rural people are in deep poverty; their community's tax base is shrinking, and social services are going down with the lower level of support;
Employment opportunities tend to be concentrated in the larger population centers, thus serving as an illusory magnet to would-be employees who are poorly prepared for competition in the non-farm labor market;
Policies and programs serving commercial agriculture have failed to meet the needs of an overwhelming proportion of the rural population;
Considerable promise for promoting viable communities and economic growth appears to lie in the smaller towns and cities, in multi-county districts, and in new towns in rural areas.

These research findings help to formulate needed national policies and programs to revitalize rural America and recapture its potential for satisfying living. Many urban migrants may change their minds and choose to return to uncongested rural areas. Others may very well choose to remain in small rural towns if opportunity makes this worthwhile.

Evaluation of national and State research in agriculture reveals that far too little attention has been given to the development of rural people and places. Support for human resource and economic development has been relatively insignificant compared with that given to research on plants and animals.

The backdrop for current and projected research is a scene of national crisis - serious, urgent, of great magnitude. The roots of urban problems lie in conditions which have stimulated excessive, long-time rural cityward migration - of the young, the poorly educated, the ethnic minorities, the poor whites - many, but not all of them, from low-income areas and seeking better opportunity than they left behind. Research must focus a sharp light on the root causes, and cures, for the rural-urban dilemmas which are part and parcel of each other. Ways must be found to promote rural development, viable growth centers, adequate educational and occupational preparation of rural residents, social and economic institutions to serve their needs, and cultural enrichment to offer the satisfactions of wider living horizons.

Rural development will not solve the urban problem, but without it the urban problem will become insoluble. Rural living, in viable towns and small

cities, must become a feasible alternative to the continued growth of megalopoli. The twin problems of rural depopulation and overcrowding of metropolitan centers are national in scope and of great urgency. Their solution demands the highest priority attention. Research must immediately be focused on providing the supporting knowledge to undergird programs and policies to rebuild rural America.

Improvement of Economic Opportunities for Rural People (RPA 907 and 804)

Problem and Scope

Lack of economic opportunity is a major problem in rural communities dispersed throughout the Nation. On the one hand, increased specialization in production and the substitution of capital for labor have greatly diminished farm-related employment; this will continue. On the other hand, expansion in the total economy has moved toward and into metropolitan centers, with the result that local community and area job opportunities are further lessened. Nonfarm employment in rural areas, although furnishing numerous jobs for a commuting rural labor force, have been grossly inadequate to absorb even a sizable fraction of those requiring employment. This is reflected in migration and income patterns, as well as in persistent rural unemployment and underemployment.

The continuing, heavy outmigration from rural areas has contributed substantially to the overcrowding of our great metropolitan centers. Today, more than 70 percent of our total population is urban. Nearly all the growth in the U.S. population during the next decade is expected to be metropolitan. The rural-urban migration has been especially heavy among rural youth and young adults in their potentially most productive years. Unfortunately, they seek economic opportunity for which they are ill prepared both educationally and occupationally.

Migration to metropolitan areas has many hidden costs. The economic and social costs to the migrating family are sizable, represented in the difficulties of the move itself, adjustment to a new environment, looking for employment, and establishing a new home in unfamiliar surroundings. The societal costs are also heavy, in terms of added congestion and attendant ills in metropolitan areas, and simultaneously, the depopulation and deterioration of the economic base of broad rural regions. Inefficient utilization of the Nation's manpower and its institutional base result from these migration trends.

Another index of the lack of rural opportunity, in addition to heavy outmigration, is the relative income position in rural and urban areas. Rural family income, both farm and nonfarm, continues to be markedly lower than in metropolitan areas. In 1964, median family income was: farm, $3,414; nonmetropolitan nonfarm, $5,542; metropolitan central cities, $6,697; and metropolitan outside central cities, $7,772.

An important dimension of the rural income problem is revealed in the extent of rural poverty. About one-third of all poverty in the United States is rural, although only about 22 percent of the total population lives in rural areas. Corollaries of the low-income situation are unemployment and underemployment. Advancing technology in both farm and nonfarm employment has rendered unskilled labor largely irrelevant in today's economy. Due to the inadequate, and largely inappropriate, education and training offered in rural areas, the rural labor force is not competitive in the present nonfarm employment market. In depressed rural areas and among minority ethnic groups, lack of occupational preparation is especially marked. This represents a heavy burden on society, both rural and urban. With high rural outmigration rates, the manpower problem assumes national significance.

Some progress has been made in the quantity and quality of education and training in recent years, but many traditional rural-urban gaps remain. Vocational education in rural areas too often stresses agricultural production where relatively little employment opportunity exists. Other aspects of rural education that still lag behind urban standards are illustrated by: lack of preschool and kindergarten experience; inadequate curriculum offerings and vocational guidance; dearth of special teaching aids, laboratories, libraries, and other educational facilities deemed necessary in modern schools.

In addition, rural workers are not being reached by manpower development and training programs, by job placement services, and by testing and counselling programs. Present efforts are directed almost solely at employment within the urban environment. Rural women, who are beginning to enter the labor market in greater numbers, should have special employment services to enable them to work part-time or full-time and in occupations for which they are or can be trained and qualified.

Consideration of rural income and employment problems does not denigrate the significant benefits to the total economy which have accrued as rural people have been absorbed in the total labor force and have played their role in an expanding economy. National income and productivity have profited thereby. The need now is to focus research on present and projected population trends and characteristics; on the spatial pattern of growth and development; and on the growing diseconomies and social costs which would result if current policies and trends continue.

A major research goal will be to examine growth patterns and to assess the potentials of regional and area growth, with emphasis on small towns and cities, their labor markets, and economic activity. A special concern will be to study the urbanizing process of town and city centers, including population movements, as well as the scale economies and functional role of smaller communities in the improvement of income and employment opportunities.

Objective

To analyze the basic needs of rural people for improved social and economic opportunity and the underlying factors involved in promoting rural development. This would include study of demographic data, regional and area economic growth patterns, and a wide range of community institutions to better serve rural people.

Research Approaches

Research approaches for this problem area include:

(a) Study of population trends and characteristics, migration and mobility patterns, age composition, residence distribution, and other relevant demographic data;

(b) Determination of the structure and processes of economic activity by regions and small areas, with emphasis on spatial aspects, interdependencies, and linkages with the larger economy; employment and income determinants, including assessment of current employment and income potentials of rural areas of various types;

(c) Identification and classification of manpower and human resource potentials in differing rural areas, including quantity and quality of the labor force, measurement of education and training required for successful labor force participation, and development of information concerning present inadequacies in area or regional training facilities, with emphasis on poverty areas;
(d) Analysis of the requisite basic economic, manpower, and service institutions, including governmental organizations, to provide effective rural development entities, such as community development districts and multi-county areas. This would include assessment of the "critical mass" and cluster aspects of various complexes or regions;
(e) Investigation of the real and social costs for rural development of continued urban implosion as compared with alternative area and regional growth outside of metropolitan areas;
(f) Determination of the impacts on regional and area income opportunities resulting from national policies such as minimum wages, various tax incentives, monetary and fiscal policy, governmental purchase of goods and services, subsidies of different kinds, and the location of governmental plants and facilities;
(g) Development and maintenance of a system of data for information and analytical purposes, to include a broad range of economic, social, and related items at the micro geographic level;
(h) Evaluation of alternative investment and program strategies for income and employment improvement;
(i) Analysis of rural family perceptions of opportunities available in the total occupational structure, to be compared with educational aspirations, goals, and attitudes of both youth and adults;
(j) Evaluation of the general educational system, public and private, and its relevance to the educational and training needs of rural people.

State Agricultural Experiment Stations and the Department of Agriculture do not generally employ personnel who are specialists in educational matters. For some of these studies, and associated ad hoc ones, means will have to be found to obtain the services of such persons to work with sociologists and economists.

The Task Force rates these objectives in the very high priority category, as they are basic to the overall goal of rural economic development. Results from this research also represent a basic input to most of the other research cataloged under Goals VIII and IX of the National Program of Research for Agriculture. Solutions for the problems of rural poverty, better housing for rural families, and the improvement of community institutions and services are all dependent on knowledge and analyses from this area of research. It is therefore recommended that resources be made available quickly, adequately, and with careful reallocation from other research areas if this is the only means of obtaining the necessary resources.

Research Effort:

SMY's	Inventory 1966	Task Force Recommendation 1972	1977
SAES	42	131	153
USDA	35	106	126
Total	77	237	279

Causes of, and Remedies for, Poverty Among Rural People (RPA 803)

Problem and Scope

Rural poverty is an integral part of the national poverty problem. It is estimated that in 1966, about 10 million rural Americans were disadvantaged by low income. Some 2 1/2 million of these rural poor persons lived on farms. The social and economic costs of poverty of this magnitude are not known, but loss in gross national product has been variously estimated at 4 to 6 billion dollars.

Much of rural poverty can be attributed to rapid technological change, accompanied by vast displacement of rural manpower. There has also been a serious lag in economic, social, and human resource development in rural areas. It is well known that in a setting of retarded or deteriorating economic conditions, people and their institutions suffer neglect. In many rural regions in the United States, there are people with low levels of educational attainment, with untended health problems, living in poor housing, and out of reach of social and cultural amenities. Many in the most severe deprivation are members of minority ethnic groups. Poor whites, however, outnumber them more than two to one.

Rural poverty has not captured national attention commensurate with its magnitude and needs. This is largely because rural poverty is not as visible as in urban concentration. Except for some regions of long-time, widespread rural poverty, as in Appalachia, rural poor persons are dispersed throughout the land, in affluent as well as distressed areas. Lack of visibility tends to obscure the size of the problem, and scattered population is more difficult to reach with welfare and other assistance programs. Small rural communities have neither the resources nor the leadership capability to minister to the needs of rural people.

Many rural poor are faced with declining or nonexistent opportunity where they live. Many do not know about, or cannot find, suitable alternatives. They are not equipped by education or training to compete in the modern technological labor market, farm or nonfarm. They do not have financial resources to remedy their deficiencies in occupational preparation or, in many cases, to risk any change at all from their present situation. In the absence of outside assistance and feasible alternatives, hope for a better life for themselves and their children disappears, and frustration takes its place.

The problem of rural people and places in poverty demands solution on its own merits. But it becomes a truly nationwide concern when it is recognized that "the alternative" rural people have been choosing for decades is seeking better opportunity in metropolitan areas. They do not often find it there, but the migration stream flows abundantly. The rural "seed-bed" nature of the urban crisis cries out for immediate action in rural small towns and cities to provide a reasonable, realistic choice to counter ever-higher flood tides to the cities. Current programs are not doing the job.

The major goal of rural poverty research will be directed to providing basic information and guidance to policy-makers and program decision-makers in

the urgent matter of ameliorating poverty through development of rural alternatives. This would include human resource and institutional development. Basic data on the extent and nature of rural poverty are needed as groundwork for planning. Research would explore causes, persistence, and implications of poverty as well as evaluating program alternatives. Innovation and adaptation of programs to special rural conditions are required for success.

Objective

To locate and define rural poverty areas, describe the rural families and individuals who live in poverty, and determine the causes and feasible solutions of rural poverty as a national problem.

Research Approaches

The general objectives of this research include:

(a) Development of meaningful, basic measurement standards for the definition of poverty in various family, regional, and residence situations, including a "goods and services" approach as well as "cost of living"; and subsequent determination of the relative extent, magnitude, and socio-economic attributes of rural poverty, farm and nonfarm;

(b) Projection of numbers of rural people in poverty, emphasizing the measurement of problem persistence and its probable future impact, including measureable economic and social costs as well as qualitative aspects;

(c) Determination of the socio-economic, personal, family, and community variables, including public welfare systems and technological change, that explain personal and area poverty; explanations of the process of escape from poverty; and delineation of relevant target groups for policy and program application;

(d) Analysis of attitudes, sentiments, and beliefs concerning orientation to life and to specific community institutions as related to poverty;

(e) Evaluation of alternative policies and programs (in human resource and economic development) for maximum prevention of poverty and solving existing poverty conditions, including the role of private as well as public inputs at differing levels;

(f) Through the above and related studies, provide a wide range of readily accessible information and knowledge on rural poverty, so that policymakers at all levels can make the best decisions in program formulation.

Research Effort

SMY's	Inventory 1966	Task Force Recommendation 1972	1977
SAES	11	36	48
USDA	8	28	35
Total	19	64	83

Improvement of Rural Community Institutions and Services (RPA 908)

Problem and Scope

Local community institutions in many rural areas are struggling for survival. They are perforce searching for new ways of rendering traditional services along with new and unfamiliar ones. In a fluctuating population situation, resources and leadership are insecure. Reduced revenues, increased demands, and high per capita costs, especially in sparsely settled areas, have contributed to a relatively low level of institutional services. Some are not available at all. Social and cultural activities in particular -- art, music, drama -- suffer in quality and quantity in comparison with those in urban centers.

Despite some improvement in recent years in, for example, rural schools and library services, the overall picture of rural community facilities is one of inadequacy and poor quality. Water supply, waste disposal, and fire protection are often lacking in rural areas. Health and medical services are relatively inferior and frequently quite inaccessible. Employment counseling and job placement are virtually nonexistent outside of urban centers. Religious institutions are finding hard going in attempting to provide a meaningful, active church program for all age groups. Some denominations are merging or are cooperating in joint efforts to obtain pastors and support buildings for declining and aging congregations.

One of the most crucial areas of concern is in the field of local government. Here again, increased demand for services, coupled with limited revenue sources, have seriously crippled the performance of local governments. Attempts to administer multiple, uncoordinated programs, both traditional and new, have diluted and fragmented the efforts of local officials to service their constituencies. Federal, State, and local programs have greatly multiplied in recent years without commensurate increase in resources and personnel. New entities have been created in some places to handle particular functions, such as special districts or commissions. These bodies often become fairly autonomous and are not always responsive to the people they serve. The proliferation of local government units, in many cases, has increased the burden of community officials in rendering assistance to families and neighborhoods with multiple needs. Much remains to be done in the way of experimenting with innovative, efficient local government machinery before counties, small towns, and cities are well served by their hard-pressed officials.

Relationships germane to Federal-State-local programs and policies pose difficult personal and administrative problems. Involved are better communication channels, interlocal and Federal-to-local cooperation and coordination, and clarification of policies and goals at all levels. Procedures need to be worked out to implement planners and program administrators, so the people at the receiving end will be more involved in decision-making and better served by the end product. This is crucial to effective human resource and economic development.

Rural business firms also face major adjustments in this period of rapid change. Customers and clients disappear in the process of heavy outmigration,

new products displace the old, tastes and preferences change under the impact of mass media and new technology. The small business finds it difficult to compete with larger shopping centers now brought nearer to potential customers by fast transportation. Increased demand for variety in goods and efficiency in services further complicate the operations of the small business man. Successful rural development could provide a sounder community base and more, satisfied customers. Research in rural community institutions can help to show the way in this field also.

Basic to this whole research area is the still unanswered question of what is a viable community -- how large it must be to support a satisfactory level of institutions and services; what kinds and amounts of resources are required; what functions are best carried out at the local community level, how, by whom or by what entity; how develop leadership to perform these functions; how achieve coordination of efforts and voluntary cooperation among local officials and community leaders. Relevant questions in this important field are manifold, and answers to them need to be urgently sought. Weak local government units, exactly where they need to be strong, may turn out to be the Achilles heel of rural development.

Past research has contributed to an understanding of gaps in facilities and services, but little is known about the role, function, and innovative potential of local institutions to promote human, social, and economic development. Many public programs have been instituted because of these known gaps and because of pressures by the public for adequate services. But these programs operate without a substantial research base for planning, implementation, and evaluation. As a consequence, research needs on these problems are among the most pressing that face rural residents and the total society. A major research goal will be to examine institutions and services in the setting of an urbanizing society, the emerging needs of people, and the interaction role (interface) between the public and private sectors.

Objective

To study and evaluate local community institutions and services, both public and private, in the context of the role, size, functions, and performance that would make the maximum contribution to viable rural communities.

Research Approaches

Objectives or approaches in this research area include:

(a) Establish an index of measurement that reflects the range and level of local public and private services and social overhead investments in rural America, and relate this index to a range of potential development characteristics and dispersions of population;
(b) Determine the scale of community institutional structures required for an efficient and effective range of services and facilities, and conversely, the critical inputs of governmental services for various levels and rates of development;
(c) Establish a functional classification of "rural communities" and study their institutional structures in the context of community growth and decline;

(d) Analyze the role and performance of various local institutions, including education, government, religion, health, welfare, recreation, cultural arts, and economic institutions;
(e) Analyze the effectiveness and potential contribution to development of private voluntary associations such as general farm organizations, resource-oriented groups, and those with general objectives related to rural life and living;
(f) In cooperation with local government units, analyze the role, functions, and problems of rural local governments in new programs which are dealing with such entities as regional development commissions, rural CAP's, employment program agencies, economic development districts, and groups to promote enhanced educational programs; this objective might also embrace a further look at local government reorganization, its potential, and the problems involved;
(g) Analysis of any developing or innovative efforts by local governments to broaden and strengthen services to the total population;
(h) Analysis of major social overhead programs, economic development, and other measures, plus study of subsequent program administration to determine variations in application and impacts on the rural population, particularly in depressed regions.

The Task Force recognizes the general lack of research in this area. There is a critical shortage of trained personnel in this field and a general dearth of readily available information, compared with some other kinds of data in economic development studies. Due to these facts, and because the administration of community institutions and services is critical in deciding on policy and program recipients, high priority should be given to this field of research.

Research Effort

SMY's	Inventory 1966	Task Force Recommendation 1972	1977
SAES	29	48	62
USDA	25	45	56
Total	54	93	118

Housing Needs of Rural Families (RPA 801)

Problem and Scope

The quality of living and the general prosperity of the countryside are singularly documented by the quality of the housing. Adequacy of living space, the condition and appearance of the house, and its true livability play a central role in the life of the family occupying the dwelling. In the development of human resources, the difference between a house and a home may turn on more subtle factors such as the comfort of modern amenities, pride of home ownership, charm of well-kept grounds, a bit of space for a vegetable garden. Proper housing can make a positive contribution to family life and living. And the converse, of course, is true.

Much of rural housing does not make this positive contribution. Nearly half of the poor housing in the United States is dispersed, inferior housing in rural areas. Houses in this category are classified as dilapidated or deteriorating, do not have inside plumbing facilities, are without central heat. Most are in need of paint and major repairs. Many do not have adequate living space. Rural slum housing constitutes an obstacle to both human resource and economic development.

In recent years, rural housing, including facilities, has had rather large increases in public program assistance. The Department of Agriculture's loan program for new housing, repairs, and renovation has increased fivefold from 1962 to 1967. Research has served to document the conditions of rural housing and has furnished the base upon which this loan program has been expanding. However, both research and loan programs have been directed toward housing per se, rather than toward housing in a total environmental setting. Therefore, a major goal of expanded housing research will be to establish the interrelationships of improved housing with effective community environments in which people live, work, trade, and seek access to a broad range of services and facilities.

Objective

To expand this field of research to include the role of housing in providing a more favorable community environment, and to evaluate innovative construction methods and residential patterns in and for rural areas.

Research Approaches

General approaches in this field include:

(a) Determination of developing residential patterns in relation to the total context of effective and pleasant communities, including the current status of rural housing, farm and nonfarm;
(b) Analysis of the economies and qualitative benefits in various rural housing patterns, including innovative satellite village housing, "new towns", clustered age-integrated houses or apartments, together with landscaping and park areas;
(c) Evaluation of potentials for special types of rural housing, such as retirement villages, commuting workers' housing, transient workers' complexes, relocation of dispersed housing, low-income housing, and multiple units;

(d) Consideration of the costs of farm housing as a part of the farm capital structure and as a part of business operations; what these costs are in relation to housing costs for rural nonfarm and urban dwellings;
(e) Exploration of the possibilities of economies in new housing materials and construction methods; this might include studying the impact of lack of building codes, standards and ordinances, and preferential tax assessments in rural communities;
(f) Evaluation of current program approaches to rural housing, with emphasis on the social values of improved housing from the viewpoint of the family and the community.

Research Effort

SMY's	Inventory 1966	Task Force Recommendation 1972	1977
SAES	5	15	19
USDA	7	13	17
Total	12	28	36

The Communication Process in Rural Life (RPA 805)

Problem and Scope

Tremendous advances in the technology of communication and the rapid urbanization of our society have had a sharp impact on all facets of rural life. They also have opened up many new challenges and opportunities in the communication field. The heavy reliance on interpersonal contact in the earlier days of rural society, and still the case in underdeveloped countries, has given way to extensive use of mass media and simultaneous receiving of messages everywhere - hamlet, small town, big city. Together with this speed of transmission have come expansion and specialization of knowledge, making it increasingly difficult for rural people to locate the precise information they need for decision-making, either as private citizens or in their work life. For the low-income and by-passed groups in the rural population, this problem is further accentuated by inferior education, language difficulties, or lack of access to the mass media.

Basic communication research is needed to help meet these challenging problems and to realize new opportunities. Most of this research is now being conducted by private business, for its own purposes. The findings, therefore, are not readily available to the public. Commercial firms and advertising agencies have learned some things about what motivates their customers, but little is known about the communication of ideas related to the democratic processes of doing public business, altering social organizations and institutions, and promoting social and economic development. The central role of communication in the dissemination of new and growing knowledge in a technological society demands greater understanding of how the communication system works.

A simplified, general-level communication model, including four elements - sender, message, channel, and receiver - will be used as a framework for discussing the complexity of communication and to point out the needs for research.

1. The sender: the person (or group of persons) who originates and sends messages.

Historically, the senders of major concern in rural America have been those involved in agricultural and home economics research, who were a part of the structure of the U. S. Department of Agriculture and the land grant college system, mainly the Extension Service. Now, many different senders are involved in conveying technical information to rural audiences. Commercial companies send messages directly through mass media, and indirectly through their marketing and input structures. Farmers and farm leaders send messages to other farmers. The competence level of these senders varies greatly, as do the motives of some of them. As the scope of the content of the messages has broadened beyond agriculture and home economics, many new senders have entered the communication situation.

The findings from research often are "filtered" by a number of "gatekeepers" in the communication process. Findings may be translated by a number of people before they reach the user. Some gatekeepers serve to keep gates open, while others may keep them closed. There is a need to know much more about how

the persons within these sender networks - the "gatekeepers" - make their decisions, and how their decisions affect what is communicated and received.

2. Message: the content or ideas the sender wishes to convey to the receiver.

Formerly, messages were simply recommendations about agricultural and homemaking practices. Over the years, the shift has been toward much more complex messages. For example, attempts are made to communicate basic knowledge (not recommendations) that will allow the farmer or homemaker to make his own decisions. More and more, senders see a need to communicate complex technology, in terms of understanding why as well as what and how; to communicate both interrelated and abstract ideas. A wide variety of new message areas has been added to the more traditional areas, e. g., community development, zoning, public affairs, farm programs.

3. Channel: the means used to convey the message (sometimes called media).

In the past, the main channels of communication were bulletins and Extension Service reports, demonstrations, meetings, and direct contact. Presently, there are many additional channels available through the mass media - magazines, special publications, newspapers, radio, television; through correspondence courses, short courses, conferences, workshops, formal adult education courses, and programmed learning. The research question is what communication channel or combination of channels, is most effective for the types of messages that are needed by various audiences.

4. Receiver: the person (or persons) who actually reads, listens to, or sees the message conveyed by the sender through the communication channel.

Among the traditional audiences of farmers and homemakers, wide differences exist in beliefs, knowledge levels, values, past experience, and individual resources. The types of messages desired, and which can be communicated, vary according to the characteristics of the receiving individuals. There is need for a clearer understanding of the criteria for designating specific audiences for various communication efforts.

Community development, social and economic development, and poverty programs clearly represent efforts in which additional audiences have become a major communication responsibility of agricultural agencies and land grant colleges. These programs envisage communication with a cross section of all occupations and social strata if optimum development is to take place. There is a crucial need for improved communications with economically depressed groups including Indians, Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Negroes, and Eskimos. Additional emphasis is required on public issues, goals, and programs, as well as on traditional technological information.

Objective

To determine the most effective means of formal and informal communication for reaching a diversified rural audience with a wide range of increasingly complex technical and scientific information. This is especially crucial in dealing with low-income, by-passed, and minority ethnic groups.

Research Approaches

(a) Inventory the kinds of specialized audiences that seek, or can benefit from, scientific information and determine present information source use of these audiences, together with reasons for using these sources;
(b) Identify and measure individual and audience predispositional variables (e.g., knowledge, attitudes and values, past behavior, and the situational context) that are determinants of, and predictive of, awareness, attention, exposure, comprehension, and behavior related to messages or events;
(c) Determine the image, including credibility, of agricultural agencies and land grant colleges and their scientists, specialists, and employees as perceived by various real and potential communication audiences;
(d) Determine the criteria used by various "gatekeepers" in the communication networks (including scientists and technicians) in making decisions regarding selection and treatment of scientific information that is sent on to others;
(e) Determine the various forms and combinations of mass media, group, and person-to-person contacts that are most effective for various types of content with different persons and groups of persons;
(f) Develop techniques and procedures for adapting all forms of educational materials to the needs of people, ranging from those of limited education and resources to the most advantaged;
(g) Determine the role of different sources and types of communication (including interpersonal communication) at various stages in the individual decision-making process, including adoption of improved farm and home practices;
(h) Analyze the communication strategies used in specific situations, their effectiveness and efficiency, and the reasons for their relative success or failure.

A question raised by the Task Force relates to the numbers and competency of personnel in this research area which calls for a high degree of specialization. The number of qualified scientists is limited. Heavier support for the relatively modest number projected in 1972 will probably result in more effective research results than rapid expansion immediately. Some short-run emphasis should be given to communications research focused on the disadvantaged and the by-passed, as well as on rural development in chronically depressed areas.

Research Effort

SMY's	Inventory 1966	Task Force Recommendation 1972	1977
SAES	17	22	27
USDA	--	--	--
Total	17	22	27

Individual and Family Adjustment to Change (RPA 806)

Problem and Scope

The adjustment individuals and families make, either well or poorly, to the forces of change lies at the heart of rural development processes. It directly affects both human resource development and institutional improvement. It is also closely related to the problems encountered in understanding and ameliorating the situation of the rural poor. Successful adjustment to change is difficult for both those who are highly mobile and those who are "boxed-in". Profound disturbances of customary values and attitudes, goals and habits, aspirations and expectations have occurred as a result of rapid mechanization in agriculture, urbanization of our society, and technological change throughout the economy. The rural occupational structure reflects these changes in the observed trend away from farming and toward blue-collar work for men, white-collar for women. Rural institutions and services have been dealt a severe blow in trying to cope with fluctuating population levels and reduced resources. Every facet of rural life has been marked by change to which individuals and families must somehow become accommodated.

Social adjustment for the rural poor, the migratory families, and minority ethnic groups is fraught with difficulties peculiar to their plight. For many, it is a continuing struggle for enough income to support their families. For some, it is a problem of instability of family life resulting from a migratory pattern of living, or enforced separation of the worker from his home base. For most, there is a paucity of institutional services and facilities available for health and medical care, welfare assistance, job counseling and placement. For all too many young people, there is poor schooling and inadequate career training and guidance. In a period of rapid change, those with the fewest alternatives, the least ability to take risks and try new things, suffer the most. They are the ones for whom adjustment is most difficult.

It is primarily the job of the sociologist and the social psychologist to find ways to ease the adjustment of individuals and families to change, but the home economist can also play a prominent role in this area of research. Many home-keeping problems will yield to practical solutions known by experts in this field that will pave the way to solving related problems of frustration, discouragement, and despair. The family, as a whole, must be assisted through a coordinated, interdisciplinary approach for optimal results.

Objective

To explore the social and psychological factors at play among families and individuals in their attempts to adjust to rapid societal change, with special emphasis on the least advantaged groups in the rural economy.

Research Approaches

Research approaches in this problem area are:

(a) Determination of the social and psychological factors involved in successful adjustment of individuals and families in a time of rapid social change;

(b) Identification and analysis of particularly difficult adjustment situations, giving consideration to the causal factors among specific target groups;
(c) Study of the atypical immobile or "boxed-in" segment in the rural population, including its identifying characteristics, location in the economy, and reasons for being so cataloged; this should include exploration of feasible alternatives for people in the immobile category, to ameliorate their position;
(d) Analysis of families in the migrant stream -- where the stream starts and where it ends, what problems are involved, and what can be done to help solve them;
(e) Evaluation of ongoing efforts to assist in the adjustment processes of people in a rapidly changing society, especially in the fields of housing, occupational preparation, job placement, household management, and interpersonal relations within the family (e.g., the generational gap; support by the family of aged and infirm members, handicapped, or unemployed; female-headed households; deserted wives and mothers).

The Task Force feels this research calls for a high degree of personnel competency and specialization. Manpower is quite limited, and is apt to continue so unless employment policies of the Department of Agriculture and the States change quickly. It is suggested that in the short run, most effective progress might be made with heavy support of those now involved in these studies and with the additional manpower they can personally attract.

Research Effort

	Inventory	Task Force Recommendation	
SMY's	1966	1972	1977
SAES	17	35	41
USDA	5	6	7
Total	22	41	48

PART II

QUALITY OF FAMILY LIVING

The home provides more than shelter. It provides a haven and a microclimate for living. It is the starting point for the Nation's human potential.

The home has been described as having an external phase relating to the community and market and an internal sphere, in part prescribed by society and in part determined by family members. Varied patterns and qualities of living stem from the interaction of these forces. A wide choice in artifacts for living is provided by a modern technology and expanding economy; opportunities for differing experiences are afforded through cultural offerings. Rapid change in the many elements bearing on quality of living has complicated our problem and confused our understanding of how we can best design programs to serve families, and thus improve levels of living.

Within the family unit there is a productive-manipulative-consuming process that provides strength and self-direction fundamental in a democratic society. However, families differ greatly in their capability to develop this process and thus achieve either their own goals or the living patterns acceptable to others in society. Families differ in their organization patterns, including management of resources and decision-making; in their psychological aspects, including family communication networks and feelings and ideas that bear on goal achievement; and in ideological factors such as beliefs and attitudes that bind individuals together and identify them with one of the several subcultures in our society. Additionally, families differ in the resources available to them and in their opportunity to use resources in the manner desired.

Scientists and society are just beginning to raise questions regarding family performance in all its complexity and to relate performance to the quality of living in a national sense. Greater understanding of family resource-use, family communication and decision processes, and family wants for goods, services, and experiences is necessary (1) if we are to provide guidelines for emerging and expanding programs designed to improve levels of living and (2) if we are to make judgments about the effectiveness of new or continuing programs. Research is a tool to understanding.

Clothing and household textiles make up a large part of family living environment, having social, psychological, and economic implications. Textiles represent a significant consumer item. In 1966, 11 percent of the consumer dollar was spent for textile items. They contribute to family well-being when products are carefully designed, have good wearing qualities, and are priced right. They also enhance the appearance and comfort of the individual and add to the charm and livability of the home.

Research Relationship to Action Programs

The Department of Agriculture is unique among Federal agencies in its network of research, education, and service responsibilities that extend even to the smallest and most isolated communities of each State and to the Territories and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. The Federal Extension Service, referred to as the educational arm of the Department, is legislatively tied to the Land Grant University system -- a tie shared by the Cooperative State Research Service, the agency administering Federal funds for research at the State Agricultural Experiment Stations. This network provides the opportunity for cooperative research and action programs at the State level.

Within the Department, the Agricultural Research Service, the Economic Research Service, the Consumer and Marketing Service, the Forest Service, and the Farmer Cooperative Service all undertake research bearing on the quality of family living. This research provides guidelines for the development and execution of action programs administered by the Department and for family-oriented non-Department and non-Federal programs. Department action programs most concerned with the quality of family living include the Federal Extension Service, the Farmers Home Administration, the Rural Electrification Administration, the Forest Service, and the Consumer and Marketing Service.

The Department's regulatory programs, such as meat inspection and pesticide regulation, are also important to the family as a consuming unit.

Legislative authority has been sufficiently broad to provide a research base for most family and consumer programs of the Department and for related State Extension programs. It should be noted that "welfare of the consumer" has not been interpreted to provide a research base for all consumer problems, nor has Department authority provided for the research undergirding of urban family living programs of the Cooperative Extension Service. Major research limitations, however, have been in level of support rather than in legislated authority. Incongruities between authority for research and Extension programs will become increasingly apparent, especially at State levels, as Extension commitments to improve quality of family living are implemented in urban as well as rural areas. Strong recommendations for this intent appear in "A People and a Spirit," a report of the joint USDA-NASULGC Extension Study Committee, dated November 1968. This document also discusses the need to strengthen the research-extension relationship at the university level.

Uses of Research

Directly or indirectly almost all research proposed in A National Program of Research for Agriculture has implications for improved living of people. However, while full recognition is given to the indirect benefits of all agricultural research, only those elements bearing directly on home, family, and consumer well-being are identified with this portion of the report.

Research devoted to improvement in the quality of family living is concerned with both the material and non-material needs of individuals and families. It includes the social, cultural, and aesthetic aspects of living; the physical and psychological needs of people; the moral and ethical dimensions of life; and the economic considerations that contribute to wise decision-making and family well-being. Because of the strong consumer orientation in this research, it does not have the predominantly rural focus of Part I of this report, but the needs of rural families have been fully considered and incorporated in the program proposed.

The purposes of the research are:

1. To develop information for societal decisions regarding government and privately supported programs having impact on the family unit, primarily to supply information on conditions, needs, and factors influencing the effectiveness of programs.
2. To develop understanding that would undergird programs designed to improve the functioning and decision-making of families.
3. To provide improved goods and services, and greater satisfaction in their use, through interpreting consumer needs and preferences, and by evaluating products, services, and the system whereby these are made available to the consumer. 1/
4. To expand the body of knowledge as it relates to the family and consumer, and to develop improved research methodology for accomplishing this purpose.

Urgency of Research Need

It is the belief of this Task Force that as density of population increases, as mass media quicken the rate and intensity of impact of events, and as the larger events impinge on the immediate life of each individual, in turn he is a potential contributor to either societal good or to social problems. We do not know the relative effect on the family of events occurring within the near environment and of those occurring in the greater society, but believe that improved quality of family living has a strong potential for contributing to the general well-being of society. It is within this context that researchable needs have been identified and judged for relative importance.

Research needs have been related to problem areas identified in A National Program of Research for Agriculture. In several instances the problem area terminology has been changed to emphasize the family or consumer focus of this portion of the report. Relationships to other proposals are noted as they occur in the body of the discussions that follow.

1/ This consumer-oriented research is seen as distinct and separate from consumer research associated with agricultural marketing interests which has for its major purpose the development of domestic markets for farm products.

JOINT RESEARCH TASK FORCE ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND QUALITY OF FAMILY LIVING
Summary of Inventory and Recommended SMY's for Quality of Family Living

Research Problem Areas	1966 1/			1972 2/			1977 2/		
	TOTAL	USDA	SAES	TOTAL	USDA	SAES	TOTAL	USDA	SAES
806 - Family Adjustment to Change	11	0	11	22	4	18	25	5	20
805 - Family Communication	0	0	0	5	0	5	10	0	10
802 - Family Use of Resources 3/	26	6	20	55 (+10)	13 (+10)	42	70 (+10)	16 (+10)	54
803 - Family Poverty - Causes & Remedies .	0	0	0	15	5	10	25	10	15
801 - Family Housing Needs	8	2	6	18	6	12	20	8	12
908 - Family Community Service Needs	0	0	0	5	0	5	10	3	7
705 - Consumer Needs - Selection and Function of Consumer Textile Items	22	4	18	29	5	24	39	7	32
TOTAL QUALITY OF FAMILY LIVING	67	12	55	149 (+10)	33 (+10)	116	199 (+10)	49 (+10)	150

1/ Inventory of Agricultural Research, Volume I, June 1967.

2/ A joint committee representing the Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy and the USDA met in Chicago on July 21-22, 1967, to review manpower allocations and recommended the SMY's shown.

3/ The SMY's shown in parenthesis represent additional effort recommended by Rural Development and Family Living Task Force.

THE FOOD AND NUTRITION RESEARCH PROGRAM

Summary of SMY Allocations Recommended by the Food and Nutrition Task Force
with
Additions Recommended for Research Pertaining to the Quality of Family Living

Research Problem Areas	1966 1/			1972 2/			1977 2/		
	TOTAL	USDA	SAES	TOTAL	USDA	SAES	TOTAL	USDA	SAES
703 - Food Choices, Habits, Consumption	26	18	8	29	20	9	34	24	10
Increase recommended by Food and Nutrition Task Force 3/							+10	6	4
704 - Quality of Food in Homes and Institutions	25	11	14	25	11	14	25	11	14
Increase recommended by Food and Nutrition Task Force 3/							+10	4	6
Increase recommended by Rural Development and Family Living Task Force				+10	+2	+8	+13	+3	+10
708 - Human Nutritional Well-Being	142	39	103	254	67	187	294	76	218
Inventory Adjustment and Increase recommended by Rural Development and Family Living Task Force	2	2	0	7	5	2	12	7	5
TOTAL	195	70	125	325	105	220	398	131	267

1/ Inventory of Agricultural Research, Volume I, June 1967.

2/ A joint committee representing the Experiment Station Committee on Organization and Policy and the USDA met in Chicago on July 21-22, 1967, to review manpower allocations and recommended the SMY's shown.

3/ Distribution between States and USDA not made by Food and Nutrition Task Force--the above distribution assumed for purpose of completing table.

FAMILY ADJUSTMENT TO CHANGE (RPA 806)

Scope

Part I of this report states that "adjustment... to the forces of change lies at the heart of rural development processes". However, individual capability to adjust and adapt develops within the family for most children, and as adults the family assists in modifying relationships to an ever-changing society. It is within the family that children and adults learn to cope with the demands of modern living. Therefore, adjustment to change is one aspect of research contributing to quality in family living.

The research proposed deals with human development and human behavior. It differs in focus from that outlined in Part I, Rural Development, only in that it relates more specifically to family functioning and family systems.

Situation

Capability to handle change contributes to the quality of national life -- a capability that is highly dependent upon the family providing a living environment that develops productive and effective individuals who have strength, vitality, and growth-potential. This capability is evidenced through the socialization function of the family (the process of preparing its members for roles in the larger society). Additionally, the family fulfills an adaptive function that has special import when examining the impact on the family of Federal legislation and public programs. The family adapts to social institutions and social programs sometimes on a quite selective basis, and changing requirements may result in an unexpected dysfunction of the family system.

Change has neither a wholly positive nor negative effect. Research questions are stated so as to assess situations and provide insights in terms of individual, family, and societal gains and costs. Changes affecting families are of many types, including geographic mobility; technological and economic change; transference of family functions; changing roles of family members; and the changing "tone" of society, including stress situations previously unknown. Adjustments must be made; at the same time habits, goals, and values are not easily modified. Yet urbanization, changing economic opportunities, exposure to differing life styles, and unfulfilled desires may lead to family and social disruption. Relatively few families have escaped urgent pressures for adjustment in their living and working habits.

In 1966, the Home Economics Subcommittee of the Extension Committee on Organization and Policy identified five areas of national concern. They stated that, "A kind of environment must be provided in the home and community that is conducive to the maximum development of children and young people, and to the adjustment of adults to society." Forces that threaten family stability and capability to perform essential functions are also undergoing change. A research base for Extension and similar public programs dealing with families is essential. Needed is an increased understanding of change as a process, of the interrelatedness of forces affecting family well-being, and of the changing roles of family members.

Research Questions to be Answered

1. What rate of change can a family or society sustain and still maintain a semblance of order? Is it in the national interest to have high geographic mobility in our population? What effect does mobility have on socialization of the young, on juvenile delinquency, on early marriage, on educational aspirations, and on family cohesiveness?

2. What are the economic, social, and psychological costs of geographic mobility to the family? What motivates some people to become "movers" while others remain "nonmovers"?

3. What variations in patterns of consumption are related to geographic or social mobility?

4. What do we know and what do we need to know of the immobile and non-adaptive families? What are their basic attributes and characteristics? Are these likely to persist among their children?

5. How do rural families adjust in city environments? Are programs effective in solving or assisting in these adjustment processes? What are the alternatives for the rural family? What guidelines are needed for program improvement?

6. What is the effect of changing parental roles upon family cohesiveness and upon personality development of children? What is the impact on the families?

7. What family factors affect young people's education and vocational aspirations? How can the role of the family be strengthened as a reinforcement to educational institutions?

8. What effect do changing occupational demands requiring greater specialized and technical training have on the family life styles? What effect does commuting to work have on family solidarity and the family's sense of "commitment" to the community?

9. What is the meaning of work under present day situations? What is the impact of leisure time (change in hours in the work week) on patterns of living and demand for community facilities?

Potential Benefits

In the past, change has often proved costly to families and communities, not only in intangible ways but in cash dollars. Research on family adjustments to change would reduce monetary costs as well as alleviate other problems. Potential benefits are:

1. Reduction in the dollar cost of providing services, counseling, and, in some cases legal controls for problem families and individuals disrupted by change or those who have failed to adapt.

2. More successful adjustment to change, resulting in a more productive work force -- urban as well as rural.

3. Family members that are more responsive to the demands of changing technology and to changes in economic opportunity. Families could function more effectively to assist their members in realizing their fullest potential -- economically, socially, emotionally.

4. With more adequate information concerning the effects of change on family functioning, alternatives for planned change could be evaluated more realistically with respect to relative gains and costs.

Research Resources

The projections recommended maintain the same one-third relationship to total Long-Range Study projections for this research problem area. However, adjustments in program focus should be made, and family studies dealing with change should be re-evaluated in 1972, with program content, size, and relevance being major considerations.

This research area calls for a high degree of scientist competence and specialization. Current manpower and discipline input is limited; studies are scattered in focus. This situation is likely to continue unless program commitment and employment policies of both the Department of Agriculture and the Stations change. Short-run effectiveness might be enhanced with heavy support of a few of the most relevant and productive studies.

Research Effort

SMY's	Inventory 1966	Task Force Recommendation 1972	1977
SAES	11	18	20
USDA	--	4	5
Total	11	22	25

FAMILY COMMUNICATION (RPA 805)

Scope

Research in family communication focuses on the flow of messages -- verbal and nonverbal -- between family members as they engage in home activities or shared experiences outside the home.

Situation

The content and quality of family communication results from personalities and family structures, plus the socioeconomic level, social system, or culture of which the family is a part. Moreover, the attainment of family goals and creation or alleviation of problem situations is closely related to kind and content of communications within the family. The general purpose of research in this area is to identify relationships and draw conclusions that will aid in improvement of family life. Priority needs would include research relating family communication to problems in financial management, child rearing, and family disruption, including undue breakdown in family cohesiveness.

A number of problems permeate rural life, among them the need to provide rural children with upbringing and basic educational experiences that will enable them to adjust successfully to changes in agriculture or migration to urban areas. The relative scarcity of community services in rural areas makes it imperative to have strong, well-functioning families. Careful planning and compatibility among family members is necessary in order that their limited resources may be used most effectively. Research in family communication has an integral role to play in the solution of these problems.

Research Approaches

Research in family communication relates to three general areas: allocation and use of family resources, interpersonal relations among family members, and communication between the family and other persons and institutions.

1. Allocation and Use of Resources
   a. Identify relationships between communication style and effective coordination of family activities, including use of resources.
   b. Characterize styles of family communication associated with different socioeconomic levels, geographic and ethnic origins, and occupation-determined life styles.
   c. Improve methodology for describing family communication patterns and interpreting findings that they may be useful to Extension workers and others implementing family programs.

2. Interpersonal Relationships Among Family Members
   a. Assess the influence of different family communication patterns on the optimum social and intellectual growth and development of children and their success in school and vocational training.

   b. Explore relationships between family communication patterns, family structure, and the values, attitudes, and morale of family members.

c. Differentiate patterns of communication related to: health problems, success in school and work, poor financial management, marital disruption, and other family problems.

3. Communications Between the Family and Other Persons
   a. Assess message flow between outside persons and institutions and various family members, and explore the nature of these messages and their effects on family functioning.
   b. Identify effective media and communication styles used for transmitting information to families and for obtaining information from them.

Potential Benefits

1. Identification of stimulating and effective communication styles would provide a means for improving competencies of children and others from deprived backgrounds and thus assist in alleviation of a major social problem.

2. Through improved communication within the family and between family members and others, families could work together and more effectively improve their social and financial situation. Communication plays a major role in decision-making and implementation.

3. New and more effective ways of helping rural families help themselves could be developed through better two-way communication between families and service, education and area development agencies.

Research Resources

In 1966 there were few Station studies relating to family communications, and none was identified as such. Projected family communications research should not be extensive, but rather studies should be proposed that are selective, highly relevant, and supportive of larger research needs of high priority; i.e., improving family resource use, improving consumer competence, or questions relating to family cohesiveness. Scientists contributing to this area should be capable of relating communications research to other program areas. In communications studies there are advantages in a geographically dispersed program. This suggests that State Agricultural Experiment Stations should consider communications research needs in recruiting future staff.

Research Effort

	Inventory	Task Force Recommendation	
SMY's	1966	1972	1977
SAES	--	5	10
USDA	--	--	--
Total	--	5	10

FAMILY USE OF RESOURCES (RPA 802)

Scope

This research area is concerned with the availability of resources, the way families make decisions regarding their use, the level of living provided, and satisfactions as consumers and family members. The research encompasses economic, social-psychological, and aesthetic aspects of family living, and draws upon the scientific competencies of several disciplines. For greatest usefulness of results, this research depends on areas of investigation proposed by other Task Forces, including studies focusing on physical characteristics, quality and use factors, and distribution of consumer products, or on community services, education, or welfare programs.

Situation

The major constituent of this research area is decision-making. Family decisions may be primarily economic in nature and concerned with financial and material resources. Other family decisions may deal with socialization of children, interpersonal relationships, values, attitudes, and beliefs. Much family decision-making involves both social and economic considerations. Establishing a separateness of economic and social decision-making is meaningful only when the single approach leads to meaningful understanding or solution of a problem. Traditionally, research has tended to concern itself mainly with economic and material aspects of family life, leaving largely untouched decisions regarding social experience. This treatment was not logical, and an integrated approach is critical in providing guidelines to understanding disadvantaged or culturally deprived groups.

Today, families are highly dependent upon the community or neighborhood for services and facilities that they may maximize living satisfactions. Their provision and the family's use of them are factors crucial to improved levels of living -- be they services, libraries, parks, adult education classes, markets, public health centers, welfare agencies, or transportation services. Understanding the forces at work, characterizing and analyzing situations, and building a body of knowledge regarding changing situations of differing population groups are the potential research contributions to this problem area.

Critical Research Needs

Special attention needs to be given to research that will help deprived families make the best possible use of their limited resources -- public or private. Living close to the margin of security, their decisions affect not only the possible survival of the present family unit, but the future well-being of their children. Decision-making and management are more difficult among low-income families because their resources are limited; decisions are more crucial; information may be lacking about quality and usefulness of products or public resources; and skills are inadequate to improve living situations.

Research Objectives

The research proposed is grouped into four categories. Research needs are noted in support of each category. These are not meant to comprise a complete list, but are suggested as indicative of need. Selection represents high priority items.

1. Resource Availability, Allocation, and Use
   a. Develop better measures of income needed to provide equivalent levels of consumption for families in different areas and living situations, of different sizes, in different stages of the life cycle, and with differing life styles, including the relative importance of these factors in influencing consumption and expenditure patterns.
   b. Identify availability and frequency of use of community resources, both governmental and private, that supplement family-owned resources, and evaluation of factors influencing the family to use them.
   c. Assess the human resource element, including attitudes, goals and values, skill levels, and physical well-being of family members, and their effect on household consumption patterns.
   d. Establish nationwide, regional, and local estimates of expenditures, consumption, and net worth of families, and determine socioeconomic factors affecting the use of family resources. Undertake related small-scale, special-purpose studies to provide in-depth information on the nature and quality of living of rural families. Due regard should be given to rural-metropolitan migration patterns and the impact on quality of living in diverse locations. Close Federal-State cooperation is required in order that the gap between local information needs and nationwide data collection may be narrowed and interpretation of findings be brought to maximum potential.
   e. Improve methodology for collecting and processing consumer expenditure, consumption, and family income data.

2. Living Qualities, Standards, and Guidelines
   a. Develop a research base to quantify "minimum decency" levels of living, including an objective "market basket" cost of goods and services for various income levels and residence situations.
   b. Establish methods of measurement for the qualitative aspects of living, such as the aesthetic and social-psychological dimensions of living, that such factors may be scientifically considered in judgments regarding quality in rural living.
   c. Develop research-based guidelines to assist families to plan for major items of investment or expenditure.

3. Managerial Ability and Decision-making
   a. Assess the special impact of poverty and deprivation on family decision-making.
   b. Explore the socioeconomic factors operating in family decision-making relative to income and resource use, and the impact of the "larger community" on such decisions.
   c. Develop a research base to identify various levels of family managerial ability and determine what is required to strengthen these capabilities.

d. Determine attitudes held toward risk and assess the nature and function of risk-taking in family financial management.

4. Consumer Satisfaction and Information Needs
   a. Evaluate communication channels between consumer and producer; study effectiveness with a view toward improvements in terms of consumer welfare.
   b. Provide research base for consumer information needs that they may know alternatives and make more informed decisions.
   c. Contribute to the development of a workable theory of consumption that integrates theories of behavior from psychology, sociology, and economics.

Potential Benefits

The resources available to rural families for improving their level of living are limited; hence it is essential that these resources be used in the most effective and efficient way. Research on economic and social decision-making in rural families would:

1. Provide families with better information about the range of resources potentially available to them, community or private, human or material, and on how to augment resources and allocate and use them advantageously, as well as prevent their misuse.

2. Maximize impact of programs for rural development and consumer education on rural poverty and productivity of the agricultural industry through more realistic planning and administration of such programs.

3. Make assignment of priorities to rural community services and educational programs in such a way that those most closely related to resource management would receive early implementation and would provide a base for other programs for the improvement of rural life.

Research Resources

USDA-SAES scientist-man-years allocated to these studies are projected to 55 in 1972 and 70 in 1977.

These projections are adequate insofar as they represent additional activity by the Consumer and Food Economics Division of the Agricultural Research Service and by State home economics studies. However, 10 additional SMY's are recommended if full development of proposed national and in-depth studies is attained, and if desired coordination of the studies is to be achieved, including multidisciplinary and Federal interdepartmental approaches. The additional SMY's are proposed by 1972.

Adequate staffing of the RPA is essential to the undergirding of action programs as they increasingly devote effort to disadvantaged families. Historically, research in this area has been inadequately funded and of insufficient scope to yield findings of the type and magnitude required for program decisions.

Research Effort

	Inventory	Task Force Recommendation	
SMY's	1966	1972	1977
SAES	20	42	54
USDA	6	23	26
Total	26	65	80

FAMILY POVERTY - CAUSES AND REMEDIES (RPA 803)

Scope

On pages 13 and 14 of this report, causes and remedies of poverty are discussed in detail and research needs are delineated. Those elements specific to the family are elaborated upon here. They include primarily measurements of poverty associated with family needs and the nature of poverty living conditions.

Situation

If deprived families are to achieve lasting progress, they must break the poverty cycle. This refers to the very real generation-to-generation inheritance of more than 15 million American children. 2/ Even as opportunities are provided for employment and incomes move upward, opportunity must be converted to a better way of life and to improved levels of living. In some cases there is opportunity but no response; in many instances even opportunity is lacking.

Currently, discussion is focused on the culture of poverty -- how families with limited resources live and get along, how they make do, the destructive and poverty-perpetuating aspects of their way of life, plus the aspects of living that are supportive and sustaining. An understanding of living in poverty and of actions taken by families in transition from poverty situations can provide program guidelines and a research base for program decisions for the several agencies working on this urgent national problem.

Research Approaches

1. Establish basic, meaningful standards for defining poverty in various family situations.

2. Identify patterns of living of disadvantaged families and common elements in patterns and life styles of those families and individuals who give evidence of being upwardly mobile.

3. Identify kinds of assistance -- goods, services, counseling, or educational programs -- that have most impact on the movement of families out of poverty.

4. Identify patterns of family interaction and interpersonal processes that provide disadvantaged and low-income families the most stability and support under changing technology and social unrest.

Potential Benefits

1. More families will be able to lift themselves out of poverty with a minimum of outside assistance.

2/ President Johnson's Message on the Welfare of Children, transmitted to the Congress on February 8, 1967.

2. Social planning can be done on a more realistic basis. Priorities can be set on programs and estimates made of their effectiveness.

3. Social unrest having its roots in poverty and associated family instability and disruption will be alleviated.

Research Resources

A multidisciplinary approach is essential to useful research in this area. Limited research dealing with family poverty was undertaken by the Department or Stations prior to 1966, although most family studies' data were analyzed by income. Thus the research identified characteristics of low-income families, but was not designed to focus on poverty as such.

Research Effort

	Inventory	Task Force Recommendation	
SMY's	1966	1972	1977
SAES	--	10	15
USDA	--	5	10
Total	--	15	25

FAMILY HOUSING NEEDS (RPA 801)

Scope

This section is supplemental to Housing Needs of Rural Families found in Part I of this report, Rural Development. There the approach starts with area planning, community provision for housing, and community building considerations. In this section, housing is approached primarily in terms of individual and family needs as met through housing provisions, including guidelines for shelter and the near environment as they contribute to quality of living.

Situation

Responsibility for housing programs at the Federal level is shared jointly by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and the Department of Agriculture, with Health, Education and Welfare, Bureau of Standards, Office of Economic Opportunity, and other Government agencies also making research contributions.

Unfortunately, research findings that would provide a sound basis for policy decisions and design standards has lagged behind good intentions. One reason is that many disciplines and widespread industry and government interests are required, and in general, these are all moving along separate paths. Furthermore, separate discipline inputs have not been coordinated. At a minimum, scientific competencies of sociologists, home economists (housing specialists), economists, architects, area planners, and engineers (agricultural and civil) are needed for research undertakings. A housing research retrieval system would assist in relating relevant information already in existence.

There is a backlog in family housing research that is yet to be implemented. This is not to imply that the research base is adequate for action programs, but rather to emphasize the fact that a research program in housing must be brought more closely into cooperation with industry interests, financing opportunities, and public program implementation if improved family living is to result. Furthermore, the communication gap between housing research, action programs, and industry interests is greater than that found in most fields. This gap must be closed if the total program is to be most effective.

The family is the ultimate consumer of housing units which today result from a complex of controls stemming from decisions and practices of a complicated industry, a perplexing financing structure, and a rapidly changing Federal role. Further complexity is added by local building codes, zoning regulations, and other local governmental regulations. Together they tie the hands of ingenuity. The result is that today the housing consumer is in certain respects more the victim than the beneficiary of the housing interests trying to serve him.

Research, but not research alone, has a role to play in reversing this trend. If one accepts the thesis that environment plays a role in human development, then it is important that studies involving people, their homes, and their near environment be expanded, and that means be found of making housing research findings useful insofar as they pertain to improved family living.

Research Approaches

1. Identify characteristics of the home and near environment as they affect human development and behavior and establish minimal standards relative thereto; e.g., need for privacy, aesthetic qualities, functional considerations, and opportunity for "neighboring".

2. Evaluate the potential for combining low initial costs, low maintenance costs, and flexibility of design into single-unit and multi-unit designs.

3. Determine the impact of single-class neighborhoods on socialization of children and social mobility of adult members of the family.

4. Evaluate alternative methods of providing assistance to families who are adjusting to improved housing conditions, using action research approaches as a basis for establishing program guidelines. Research and demonstration, rather than research per se, may well be the tool needed to implement change.

5. Determine financing alternatives for housing and household equipment and furnishings; evaluate options and practices in relation to income levels and expenditure patterns of differing population groups.

6. Investigate interrelationships between population density and environmental factors in and near the home, such as light, temperature, humidity, sound, privacy, odor, and chemical and microbiological contaminants; establish levels of sensitivity or hazard at which spatial use between units, design changes, controls, or systems modifications are indicated.

7. Determine point at which variations in family living patterns -- reflecting different stages in the life cycle, locality, economic stratification, or social differences -- become pertinent in the development of standards for space needs for families and individuals, including minimum standards for low-income housing.

8. Develop housing prototypes to serve as evaluation laboratories for low-income family needs and aspirations.

9. Design mechanical cores that can be mass-produced at lower costs and added to structurally sound buildings, new or used, in order to reduce the still high incidence of rural housing without piped water, bath, or central heating facility.

10. Study the impact of different arrangements of rooms, furnishings, and equipment on the quality of family life and performance of family functions and activities.

Potential Benefits

1. Housing costs will be reduced because designs for new and remodeled housing units can take advantage of technological innovations and more efficient methods of construction.

2. More sound and adequate financing arrangements will reduce the financial burden to families and public housing programs.

3. Improved physical and mental health will result from application of housing standards and designs adapted to present patterns and conditions of family life.

4. Family and community life will be made more satisfying by housing designs and area planning adapted to the special needs, limitations, aspirations, and values of subgroups in the population -- age, ethnic, or disadvantaged groups.

Research Resources

In 1966, the Inventory of Agricultural Research showed 20 scientist-man-years devoted to housing needs of rural families, 11 in the States and 9 Federal. Of the 11 in State work, 6 were considered working on housing as it affected family living and 5 as it affected rural development. For the Federal component, 6 were engaged in agricultural engineering research, 2 in clothing and housing research, and 1 in economic development. A multi-disciplinary base will be required for implementation of the research proposed. Greater coordination of research efforts and improved liaison between scientists and action program leaders are requisites to revitalizing the Department's research program in housing.

Research Effort

	Inventory	Task Force Recommendation	
SMY's	1966	1972	1977
SAES	6	12	12
USDA	2	6	8
Total	8	18	20

NOTE: See also RPA 801 on page 5.

FAMILY COMMUNITY SERVICE NEEDS (RPA 908)

Scope

Community services to families include a number of functions which in the past were performed within the family, by and for family members. These include education, occupational and other training of individuals for adult roles, and certain protective and supportive functions -- health care, medical services, financial support, care and protection of family members while others work outside the home. Today new forms and kinds of family services are necessary, and in amounts and type that meet today's population demands.

Situation

In response to increased and changing needs for community services to families, new agencies and programs have been established at Federal, State, and community levels, and existing agencies have been assigned new responsibilities. Because needs were urgent and immediate, these programs have been established with little research evidence to provide guidelines and standards.

Some programs of service to families are extremely successful; others have appeared to be misdirected or inefficient. Some potentially good programs have been near-failures because they have not been designed to accommodate the special requirements for needs and values of the families they are intended to serve. In most cases it has been impossible to evaluate the worth of programs in relation to their costs. Research evidence is urgently needed as a basis for modifying, redirecting, upgrading, or in some cases discontinuing programs providing education and service to families.

Research Approaches

Since research on community services to families is closely related to action programs, research objectives can best be stated as questions for which these programs urgently need answers.

1. What community-based services are needed by families of different geographic and ethnic backgrounds, at different stages of the family life cycle, and with different educational attainments, values, goals, and family living patterns? Are family-oriented programs too standardized?

2. How can the quality of various family services be measured in relation to need and cost? How can geographically dispersed families be assisted in meeting living needs? What program modifications are required?

3. Can alternative forms of family services be developed to adapt to local conditions -- dispersed populations, unique cultural values, occupational requirements?

4. What organizational forms are best suited for particular family-service needs? Should each service be offered independently, or should they be coordinated? Should family service be attached to the school or some other institution?

5. How can families be stimulated to assume leadership and cooperate in initiating and carrying on programs? Are family service programs strengthened when user-families share part of the costs; i.e., provide or maintain physical facilities or contribute labor?

6. What services are needed to prepare families to adapt to internal changes as the family moves through the life cycle, and to external changes in social organizations, societal expectations, technology, and occupational opportunity?

Potential Benefits

1. Community services to families will be better adapted to their needs, will be more efficient, and will be of higher quality.

2. Priority can be given to services having the highest return to society.

3. A larger proportion of the support needed for such services can be borne by the families served and by the local community.

Research Resources

There was no research specific to family needs from community-service programs in 1966. Such research will take a unique approach and several disciplinary competencies, including industrial psychologists, Extension and social workers, and community planners could make a contribution at this planning stage. A small program specific to the problems of rural communities is recommended.

Research Effort

	Inventory	Task Force Recommendation	
SMY's	1966	1972	1977
SAES	--	5	7
USDA	--	--	3
Total	--	5	10

FOOD CHOICES, HABITS, AND CONSUMPTION (RPA 703)

Scope

Consumer-behavior and food-consumption data provide information for dietary appraisal, for economic analyses, and for understanding consumer food practices and preferences. The primary purposes of such studies are to (1) provide information for family use in food-management decisions and (2) develop research-based information for agencies and program leaders assisting families in improving their dietary levels.

Situation

Over time, research providing food-consumption data has indicated patterns of food use by families of different structures, different stages in the life cycle, and different economic situations. These studies yield insights into food-purchase behavior, and provide understanding of such practical problems as the effect of price changes on purchases and seasonal shifts in food expenditures. They provide information used in the development of consumer food-management guides. They have ranged in population scope from national to local studies. Some of the research has been repeated periodically, thus providing trend data on food patterns and practices.

To achieve maximum benefits from food consumption and preference data and other food and nutrition research, it is essential to determine how individuals and families make food choices, how food habits are formed, how food practices may be changed, and what segments of the population need to change their food patterns. These research questions provide one link between nutritional requirements and well-fed, satisfied consumers. Such research is now inadequately developed, but is urgently needed if education and action programs are to be most relevant to consumer well-being.

Motivation research is an emerging tool in implementation of nutrition-education programs. Many questions can be meaningfully pursued through in-depth and experimental research approaches. In the past, much consumer-behavior research in Agriculture has been highly descriptive or has confounded the consumer and producer interests. Even so, these and other research findings should be synthesized, clarified, and, when possible, further interpreted that gaps may be identified and understandings now hidden in research data or reports be brought to full usefulness.

In the future, the most useful insights are likely to emerge from studies directed toward understanding food behavior of selected population groups. Motivation studies of national scope are not recommended, but better coordination of consumer-behavior research is needed and could result from stronger Department leadership.

Research Approaches

To give additional emphasis to research recommended by other Task Forces, the following are proposed:

1. Rapidly accelerate studies yielding understanding of formation and change in individual food habits. A multidisciplinary approach is required.

2. Develop information regarding factors influencing family food use as a basis for facilitating education and action programs. New research approaches should be attempted.

3. Continue sequential national food consumption studies to provide periodic data for dietary appraisal, economic analysis, and market considerations. On a smaller scale and with selected population groups, collect supplemental data, including physiological and biochemical measurements, that incidence or likelihood of nutritional problems may be identified. For greatest usefulness, biological data should not be disassociated from family income, food expenditure, or other acquisition data.

Potential Benefits

1. Better health, with positive improvement in, as well as absence of, nutritionally caused problems would result from a better understanding of food practices in relation to other aspects of family living patterns and family resources.

2. Education and action programs would be more effective as a force for improving individual food habits and family living patterns. Use of food dollars would be improved.

3. Greater consumer satisfaction and improved performance of people would result from better adaptation of food information to family and individual needs and resources.

Research Resources

The research proposed is closely associated with parameters identified with RPA's 708 and 802, and research relationships should not be artificially blocked by a narrow definition of RPA 703 nor by University or Department organization lines. The combined efforts of specialists in nutrition, psychology, physiology, food science, food economics, marketing, communications, family life education, sociology, and cultural anthropology are needed. The discipline base was narrowly represented in 1966. This Task Force concurs with the Food and Nutrition Task Force which projected needs for 1972 and 1977. There is need to have a strong multidisciplinary group represented in the program.

Research Effort

SMY's	Inventory 1966	Task Force Recommendation 1972	1977
SAES	8	9	14
USDA	18	20	30
Total	26	29	44

HOME FOOD USE (RPA 704)

Scope

Homemakers are continually confronted with new types and forms of food and appliances. Research-based guidelines are needed to assist in food management, storage, and preparation in the home under rapidly changing situations. Technology has brought a new food world to the homemaker who still wishes to assure her family of wholesomeness, appeal, nutritional value, and safety in meals.

Situation

Foods have both consumer acceptance and nutritional value. Both may be lost if the food is improperly prepared or handled. Food preparation is in a transition period with increased preparation occurring outside the home, but this does not mean that research to assist the homemaker is no longer needed. Food research in the consumer's interest has not kept pace with innovations in cooking equipment (i.e., microwaves), refrigeration, or with the alternatives confronting the homemaker because of the changing composition of basic foods or increased number of convenience foods. Labeling is frequently inadequate, and from the consumer's standpoint there is an unfortunate information gap. This is doubly felt because of the tremendous increase in mass-media advertising that leaves consumers and Extension personnel alike without information needed to interpret mass-media communication.

Research Approaches

In addition to food research needs recommended elsewhere, the following food management research is proposed:

1. In order to assist homemakers in food-handling decisions, determine factors that cause deterioration of foods during household storage (nutritive value, flavor, color, appeal, and other desirable qualities) and develop preventive procedures for home use.

2. Develop research-based guidelines concerning effects on product quality and appeal of particular techniques and appliances for food handling, in order to assist consumers in their practices and decisions regarding new food forms and new appliances.

3. Develop guidelines for product-labeling to improve consumer knowledge of product-quality, preparation and storage procedures, nutritional values, and cost of foods.

4. To assist in homemaker decision-making, develop research-based information indicating alternative considerations in the selection and use of convenience foods, partially prepared foods, and traditional foods, with special consideration of food safety.

5. Using experimental approaches, develop new procedures for translating research information so that consumer food education might be meaningful and relevant to the needs of differing population groups.

Potential Benefits

1. With more adequate information, homemakers will be able to provide a greater variety and more palatable quality of foods in family menus. There would be improved food safety and better retention of nutrient values of foods.

2. The family food dollar would be used more knowledgeably. Time otherwise necessary for food handling will be saved for other activities.

Research Resources

This research approach is supplemental to food-research needs proposed by other planning groups.

Research Effort

SMY's	Inventory 1966	Task Force Recommendation 1972	1977
SAES	14	22	30
USDA	11	13	18
Total	25	35	48

HUMAN NUTRITIONAL WELL-BEING (RPA 708)

Scope

The Food and Nutrition Task Force had major responsibility for this problem area. This section covers only that research basic to the preparation of family food-budget guides and is concerned with family dollar costs in providing nutritionally adequate meals. Inclusion here is in recognition of the family as the decision-making unit in food expenditures.

Situation

Nutritional requirements are translated into many food patterns at different food-cost levels by American families. Guidelines to assist in relating food costs and nutritional adequacy of the diet have been most useful to homemakers, educators, and welfare agencies for establishing food-budget levels. In developing such guidelines, both family practices and relative economy of foods must be taken into consideration. In the 1930's, the United States Department of Agriculture first developed a series of food budgets at different cost levels, which have been widely used. Such research-based service requires continuing review and updating.

Research Approaches

The following are proposed:

1. As new information on human nutritional requirements is developed, as new foods change nutritive values, as the relative economy of foods changes, and as different consumer preferences and eating patterns emerge, consumer budget and food plans should be revised to reflect the newer knowledge.

2. New techniques need to be studied to (a) make the USDA food budgets as objectively derived as possible, and (b) keep the estimated costs current, feasible, and applicable to specific geographic areas.

3. Translate USDA food budgets into more practical guidelines for food management than are now available.

Potential Benefits

1. Consumers would have up-to-date information on which to base their food-management decisions.

2. Welfare agencies and government officials would have up-to-date information on which to base policy decisions and estimates regarding money and food needed to provide nutritionally adequate diets.

Research Effort

SMY's	Inventory 1966	Task Force Recommendation 1972	1977
SAES	103	189	223
USDA	41	72	83
Total	144	261	306

SELECTION AND FUNCTION OF CONSUMER TEXTILE ITEMS (RPA 705)

Scope

In the American way of life, textile items fulfill a complex of needs and desires. The research proposed is consumer-oriented, and focuses on consumer-choice, clothing consumption and use patterns, prediction of performance and use-satisfaction, and guidelines for budgeting and for maintenance of clothing and household textiles.

Situation

It is the responsibility of this Task Force to identify clothing and textile furnishings' research needs important to improving the quality of family living.

Selection of clothing and household textiles is a matter of valuing, and relatively little is known in regard to the role of textiles in fulfilling living needs. Current understanding of consumer choices provides inadequate theories for predicting change in consumption patterns. Cultural orientations, ethnic background, and socioeconomic factors are presumed to influence choice, but to date studies designed to yield insights have been largely non-existent. Fiber research has been primarily developmental in purpose and undertaken by and for industry. The consumer relationship to the textile industry has been a one-way street, even though the home, with its ineffective feedback, has provided the product-testing laboratory. A countervailing consumer-oriented research program continues to be needed by the consumer, and its establishment has been encouraged by industry.

Currently, there is no adequate research base for establishing minimum standards for physical well-being or social acceptance in regard to clothing. This gap is becoming increasingly apparent as welfare budgets are being challenged in terms of adequacy of clothing allowances, and as educators, seeking ways to assist the poor, find information inadequate. The equivalent of the research base for food quality or nutrition standards is not available for consumer clothing and household textile interests. The Department has played a leading role in the establishment of food and nutrition guidelines. They are widely used, and the equivalent is needed for clothing and household textiles for policy, consumer education, and protection purposes.

Improvement in quality of living can be assisted through research designed to: (1) Upgrade performance qualities of all textile items; (2) determine the needs and wants of consumers; (3) improve consumer selection techniques; (4) attack consumer problems in maintenance of textiles; (5) understand the role of aesthetics and social acceptance in dress and home decoration; and, (6) establish research-based guidelines for multi-program purposes.

Research Approaches

1. Determine consumer preferences and needs for specific characteristics in fabrics and garments, including aesthetics, maintenance, and capability for modification of the living environment; relate to satisfaction with given end-uses; give special consideration to unique needs of the handicapped, the very young, and the elderly.

2. Determine meaning and factors in acceptability of clothing and fabric furnishings by different social and economic groups; establish research-based standards to assist low-income families meet minimal levels of social acceptance; develop clothing budgets to guide educators, families, and welfare agencies in dealing with clothing costs.

3. Accelerate pace of studies of consumer textile consumption, including sources and mode of acquisition, textile flow (duration of use, dual family use, etc.), in order to interpret textile use patterns to the industry and to educators.

4. On a continuing basis, develop research-based information needed to maintain cleanliness and sanitation of clothing and household textiles and insure safety in household use.

5. Establish standards for clothing fit and function, primarily through anthropometric research, that clothing items may be designed and made available in a range of sizes that require minimum alteration.

6. Determine the clothing comfort levels under different climates and living situations, with due regard for garment styles and fit; determine interrelationships among environmental situation, design, and fabric properties.

7. Increase the body of knowledge concerning fabric performance in specific end-use situations, and determine interaction of fiber properties, yarn and fabric geometry, and finishes so that more accurate prediction of performance may be accomplished.

Laboratories in support of this research are in need of updating, and improved techniques and procedures must be developed if scientists are to accelerate the pace of consumer-oriented textile research.

Potential Benefits

1. The family living environment will be more satisfying and enjoyable through use of household textile products adapted to new and changing patterns of family life. The preferences and needs of consumers for textiles will be met to a higher degree.

2. Household textile products will give improved performance because consumers can select and care for products on the basis of more adequate and reliable information.

3. The family's clothing and textile dollars will go farther toward satisfying the family's needs and aspirations. Health, safety, and comfort of family members will be enhanced through improved sanitation and safety features of textiles.

4. Improved self-image, important in upwardly mobile families, and improved acceptance by others will give strong support to family members as productive, successful individuals.

5. More adequate interpretation of consumer wants to industry, public agencies, and educators will strengthen their programs for improved production, marketing, and use of textile products.

Research Resources

These research approaches emphasize the fact that textile research cannot be narrowly defined if it is to serve consumer and family needs. A consumer program must include such scientific competencies as textile chemistry and engineering, microbiology, family economics, sociology, social psychology, physical and cultural anthropology, and home management. If the research is to center on the role of textiles in meeting family needs and improving quality of family living, a concentration of scientific specialties at a few centers would assist in clarifying this program focus. At present, a few State Agricultural Experiment Stations hold promise for this type of concentration, and could serve as locations for placement of a limited number of Department employees. Regional research also holds promise for concentration of effort.

Research Effort

SMY's	Inventory 1966	Task Force Recommendation 1972	1977
SAES	18	24	32
USDA	4	5	7
Total	22	29	39